

PLANNING, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND REPORTING STAFF

OVERVIEW

THE **PLANNING, ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING STAFF (PARS)** provides leadership to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) in strategic planning, performance measurement, and evaluation. NIFA uses these activities to improve program leadership and management, allocate resources, and evaluate success. Specifically, PARS

- leads development of NIFA's strategic plan and supports strategic planning at the portfolio and program levels;
 - leads assessment of NIFA's program portfolios, which are completed annually by internal teams and every 5 years by panels of external experts;
 - develops the performance sections of NIFA budget submissions; and
 - supports the performance initiatives of the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- PARS provides leadership for grantee accountability through both formula and non-formula grant reporting and

analyzes these reports to prepare technical, statistical, budgetary, and performance reports. PARS works with other NIFA offices and grantees to sets policies and procedures regarding grant reporting. PARS also defines business requirements for building and managing reporting systems. In this capacity, PARS convenes the NIFA Classification Board, which maintains the classification system used by NIFA's reporting systems. PARS facilitates NIFA's review of multistate research projects, intellectual property reporting and issues, and assigning national program leaders (NPL) for institutional (program) reviews.

900

The average number of reports on data that PARS generates annually

30

The average number of days *decreased* in the time it takes to approve plans in the new Plan of Work review process for NPLs

PARS TEAMS

PLANNING AND EVALUATION TEAM (PET)

PET provides leadership for agency strategic planning and program assessment. NIFA programs cover a broad spectrum, ranging from fundamental research to Extension programs to education grants. A large number of legal authorities and appropriation lines fund these programs, many of which support multiple agency strategic goals. NIFA created portfolios of programs to keep planning and assessment process at a level of manageable scope and meaningful size. Each portfolio contains a set of continuing activities that focus

on a current and/or emerging issue of societal importance that serves as the foundation for agency planning and assessment. Multiple programs may support the activities funded within a single portfolio. Likewise, many NIFA programs span multiple portfolios. These portfolio assessments are used to develop the NIFA Strategic Plan.

Team members also provide leadership for tracking intellectual property and managing the NIFA Outcomes Database, which tracks the outcomes of NIFA-funded research.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING TEAM (ART)

ART provides agency leadership for formula and non-formula grant reporting and analysis and national leadership for grantee accountability. ART defines NIFA's business requirements for the online reporting systems—the Current Research Information System (CRIS), the Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) State Plans of Work and Annual Reports of Accomplishments, and the upcoming REEport system to replace CRIS. ART also provides leadership for the formula grants Plans of Work and Annual Report of Accomplishments, formula grant

research projects, and Hatch Multistate Research project proposals review and approvals by NIFA NPLs. Subsequently, ART extracts and analyzes the data located in these reporting systems for use by PET, NIFA staff, the NIFA budget documents, USDA, OMB, Congress, and other stakeholders. ART is the main customer service contact to grantees who enter grant reports into the online systems. ART provides annual training for NPLs who review and approve formula grant Plans of Work, as well as bimonthly training to the grantees.

PLANNING, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND REPORTING STAFF (CONT'D)

MAJOR PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

NIFA PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS

NIFA's portfolio of programs solves national issues through research, education, and Extension; demonstrates accountability of public funds; and exhibits research, education, and Extension discoveries to improve the food and agricultural sciences.

The new portfolio planning and assessment cycle will produce the following four documents:

- the Portfolio Pre-Planning Inventory, an inventory of the status of the portfolio and its accomplishments relative to the current state of agricultural science being addressed by the portfolio;
- the Portfolio Planning Document, the portfolio's plan for solving a national issue and will show the portfolio's connection to NIFA's vision, mission, and goals;
- the Portfolio Assessment Document, the illustration and assessment of the implementation of the portfolio's plan relative to its accomplishments; and
- the Portfolio Quality Improvement Plan Document, which will build on the conclusions of the portfolio assessment and include responses to comments of internal and external bodies.

AREERA PLAN OF WORK AND ANNUAL REPORT

AREERA requires that states submit Plans of Work (POW) in order to receive federal funding under the Smith-Lever Act, the Hatch Act, and the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, which are the funding authorities for Extension and research activities. The AREERA POWs pertain only to the Smith-Lever 3(b)&(c), Hatch, Evans-Allen, and 1890 Extension funds. Other funding authorities, such as the Smith-Lever 3(d), Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), and other grants and project funds, continue to require individual project/program proposals for their continued distribution of funds.

PARS distributes policy updates and provides guidance to land-grant university (LGU) partners concerning their annual submissions of Plans of Work and Annual Reports of Accomplishments and Results. PARS, in conjunction with NIFA's Office of Information Technology, monitors the AREERA POW reporting system. This system is used by LGUs to input and edit data and officially submit their POWs and annual reports.

CRIS GRANT REPORTING

CRIS provides documentation and reporting for NIFA's ongoing agricultural, food science, human nutrition, and forestry research, education, and Extension activities for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA research agencies, State Agricultural Experiment Stations, LGUs, other cooperating state institutions, and participants in NIFA-administered grant programs (including Small Business Innovation Research and AFRI) conduct or sponsor the projects.

REEport DEVELOPMENT

REEport will become NIFA's singular grant and formula project reporting system, building on and replacing the existing CRIS web forms system. REEport will use the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR), a standard progress report format that all federal research agencies will be required to use.

HATCH MULTISTATE RESEARCH FUND

The multistate research program, authorized by the Hatch Act, enables research on high priority topics among the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) in partnership with NIFA, other research institutions and agencies, and with the Cooperative Extension Service. In this way, technological opportunities and complex problem solving activities that are beyond the scope of a single SAES can be approached in a more efficient and comprehensive way. These activities involve cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches. They are oriented toward the accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts based on priorities developed from stakeholder input and are responsive to NIFA goals.

The multistate research program is funded through the Hatch Act, which is one of several formula fund appropriations that NIFA allocates to the 50 states and territories. Hatch uses a formula based on population and other factors. Not less than 25 percent of Hatch funds are allocated for the Multistate Research Fund. Multistate research activities are managed and documented through the National Information Management and Support System.

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